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WORLD TRADE CENTER TASK FORCE INTERVIEW  
ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE MARSHAL RICHARD McCAHEY

Interview Date: November 2, 2001

Transcribed by Elisabeth F. Nason

R. McCahey

FIRE MARSHAL CAMPBELL: The time is now 11:10. This is Pat Campbell, Fire Marshal of the Fire Department, New York City. I'm here conducting an interview with Assistant Chief Fire Marshal McCahey in the conference room on the 6th floor of 16 Hooper Street. Also present in the room is --

FIRE MARSHAL STARACE: Fire Marshal Michael Starace.

FIRE MARSHAL CAMPBELL: And --

CHIEF McCahey: Assistant Chief Fire Marshal Rich McCahey.

Q. We are here to get a history today of the events that happened on September 11. What we are interested in is that from the time you became aware of the attack until the first plane hit the south tower until after the second tower had collapsed. Just go ahead and tell us everything. If we have any other questions, we'll ask them at the end.

A. Okay. Tuesday, September 11 was Election Day. I remember when I got up, I called the bases like I do every day. I checked with each of the commands, how the night was before. On my way in to work I stopped to vote at McKee High School. I guess it was

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probably maybe 8 o'clock, five after 8, along those lines. It was the wrong place to go so I was directed to go to another place to vote. So I went to that place. New Dorp High School. I put my vote in.

As I was leaving, I remember as I was leaving the high school after voting, my beeper went off, a page for 722-2900, which is up here on the fifth floor, which I assume is Murf. My car was probably 15 feet away and I said I will wait until I get into the car and call him. As I put the key into the car door, that's when I believe the first page I got was 33 for plane crashing into the World Trade Center, a third alarm.

So I didn't think -- I didn't know what it was. I'm thinking maybe a small aircraft. I get into the car, I call Murf, asked him what's going on. He said have you heard it, yes. Plane crashed. No, at that point I believe he said looks like it was a big big crash and I think he said at that point he also told me that the second crash had just taken place. He said it looks bad. They were watching it from the windows at Hooper Street. I told him okay.

At that point I said, reach out to Bobby Burns and all the FIU, and have them respond right

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there. I said reach out to Brooklyn base, have them respond there. Reach out to the fire senior and have him respond. Reach out to -- basically everybody. I wanted everybody to the scene. Notify the Chief Fire Marshal that I was responding at that point. I started heading up Hylan Boulevard towards the Verrazano Bridge and then past the 122 precinct, I believe it's the emergency service truck number 5 was pulling out lights and sirens.

Figuring that's where they are going, I got behind them. I figured they would open a path, which they did. Coming down Father Capadanno Boulevard, there was debris, papers and just ash and I got my first glimpse, as I was getting on to the bridge of the towers. I could see it was bad. I called Murf again, basically asked him if everybody was on their way. He was reaching out to us and I told him keep the radio open, keep your cell phones open and I will be getting back to him.

I followed ESU 5 up the Gowanus. It was clear sailing through, I believe it was the buff lane, so we were moving. We got to the tunnel. They had already cleared the tunnel, so I was followed by maybe one or two other emergency vehicles, but it did seem

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like it was us two. I followed them through the tunnel. At that point I just received a phone call from Murf who said that it appeared it's a terrorist attack. He even thought that the second one was a missile. He said it looked like a rocket from there, but he feared, if it was a terrorist attack, just to let me know. My mind was -- not going through the tunnel was a good move. Anyways, we went through the tunnel. I remember coming out at the other end of the tunnel. I think they were directing us. There were probably tunnel cops there. I followed ESU. We went up, made a right up West Street, looking at your map here. We went up West Street, things were going well. Actually I remember in retrospect, I remember seeing what I thought was one or two, maybe two or three bundles on the side of the road from the tunnel, up until around Albany.

Later on I had found out they were body parts. I just thought it was a couple of dogs. You know, a couple of dogs got hit. Your mind plays games. I pulled up at Albany and West Street. They waved ESU. There was a police officer there, they waved ESU into the opposite lane to get up more in front of the building. That's, I guess, where our

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command post was. I was right behind ESU. They stopped traffic. They stopped me right there. As ESU went up, the cops who were waving, I believe maybe another rig or two were coming. I sat there for probably 30, 40 seconds. I said you know what, the hell with this. I made a right. I went over the divider at Albany. There was a cut in it anyway, so it wasn't a big deal. I pulled right on to the corner on Albany, off the corner of West Street facing towards the water.

I got out of the car, I let the Manhattan dispatcher, I think I did, I can't remember, I usually do, that I'm on the scene. I definitely let Hooper Street know that I was on the scene. At that point I started walking up West Street in the direction towards Vesey to locate the command post, which is where I usually report in to at a scene like this, where the highest ranking officer are found. On the way up there I remember seeing Dave, the buff car parking on West Street from Brooklyn base, and in front of him was, I believe it was Harry Meyers, I believe Steve Gregory was there, maybe another individual. I believe Jerry Barbara was there. They had their trunk open, maybe they were putting their gear on. I just stopped and

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asked them, kind of half joking, is this the command post, I'm on my way to the command post. They said no. I said do you know where it is. I think Harry said, I think it's up there, so keep going.

I continued up and at this time, I was just in a suit and tie. At this point I continued up West Street. I went under the first overpass. I guess that's around Liberty Street according to the map. I go under the first overpass and I cross Liberty Street and as I get maybe 15, I'm looking at the sky the whole time. I try to keep my eyes up.

Again, like I mentioned before to Mike earlier, in '93 one of our big problems was falling glass. There was a lot of glass falling in '93, so I was conscious of that. I didn't have a helmet on at the time. I was looking up. Everything looked good. The sky was blue. I looked down for a brief second. About 3 feet in front of me a piece of metal maybe 6 inches by 11 or 12 inches hit the ground about 3 feet in front of me. I didn't see where it came from. There was a firefighter to the right of me. I remember looking over at him, he said wow that was close or you were lucky or something like that.

At that point I said you know what, I'm going

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to go back and put my helmet on. Again, I was probably halfway towards the command post. I just passed maybe 50 feet on Liberty Street. I turned around, walked all the way back to Albany and West, opened up the trunk of my car, got my helmet, and at that time I put on my windbreaker to identify myself, who I was.

As I closed the trunk, I believe the first group of guys I think I saw were Brooklyn base guys coming, Brian Grogan was the supervisor. He had about three or four Marshals with him. I can't remember all of them, I think Masser, Pascarella, something like that, you know, those guys. Nobody had gear on.

At that point I stopped them and I said I want everybody to go back and get their fire gear. They were like biting at the bit to get up and see what was going on. At that point though I was stern. We may have even had -- to make a point, I even -- at one point I even told Brian, I want gear on, and I pointed to the front of 1 World Financial Center, which was across the street and I said this is where our command post is going to be. I wanted everybody to get gear and report back to there. That was just short of the overpass, the south overpass. We were right there. 1 World Financial Center, between Dow Jones and



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Oppenheimer, right there.

I put them up there, right in front of the door, but I watched them later on as they creeped up towards the foot bridge. But they didn't go past there. I grabbed Brian Grogan, who was supervisor, you are in charge of keeping everybody there. You know, anybody goes by here Brian, you know, we're gonna fire them, or something like that, in jest, but I wanted to get the point out. I didn't want anybody going past here.

At that point I believe Jay, Supervising Fire Marshal J.D. Lynn, I saw him coming from across the street, where the hotel was, whatever that construction they are doing over there. Right about here, to whatever that building is over there. Coming from like Cedar, he was coming from across the street. Again I believe he had a windbreaker on. I stopped and I said, "J.D., don't even think about it. Go back and get your gear." I believe he acknowledged me. Again at that same point I believe Bobby Burns showed up, and some of the guys from FIU. Again, I relayed the same information, go back and get your gear. I didn't want anybody going past there, and we'll maintain a command post where I had already said.

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I believe I probably had one -- as I was talking to Bobby, I remember one of the Marshals going holy, whatever, pretty loud and I turned around and I noticed these black figures that were in the corner of my eye were actually bodies. They seemed like little tiny black figures. I saw one or two of them. I remember turning to the Marshal and telling him relax. Then he went again oh, my god, somebody went oh, my god, another one. I remember turning to the Marshal and saying listen, we are the professionals here, we got to compose ourselves. Relax, don't be screaming that out. We got a job to do, okay. Again, everybody go get their gear, okay. I think at that point we probably turned around and watched maybe 2 or 3 people jump. I remember standing there just watching. I remember one guy coming down. One guy was coming down on his back, his hands up. One guy came down with a white shirt. It looked like he was waving it. Probably after that I think we all saw one. He hit like a light post or a fence, and basically just went to pieces.

At that point, I was going to start my way again back to the command post. I think Bobby Burns showed up with a helmet or a bunker coat. After making

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sure that I had all the guys, I told them we want to stay here. I will go up there, find out what they need. When I come back, again, I want everybody to be here. I don't want nobody going anywhere, okay.

I had turned to start and at that point I remember looking up at 1 World Financial Center, to the best of my recollection, I remember seeing Mike Starace, but I also remember seeing Dr. Kelly and she was with a firefighter or an officer. He was a guy with a helmet and turnout coat. I think he was a Lieutenant or Captain. I think his front piece was white. I'm not sure. That distracted me. I went to see what was going on.

I walked up sort of an incline, walking up right here. So I walked up the incline, I think I got to the top, I don't know if it was like, hey, what's up, or what's going on. I don't know what came or how much we got until somebody -- I heard a roar and somebody said, whatever, it's collapsing, it's going and everybody started running. I don't think I looked at that time. I just started running down, back down the incline. I think when I got to the sidewalk area, turning to go to make a right back towards Albany, I looked over my shoulder briefly and I could see this

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big cloud of dust. It looked like it was coming pretty good.

At that point, thinking fast, I had a few options. When I got to the corner of Albany, that's where my car was and I was thinking about either -- my first thought was actually, there was a fence, a chain link fence, it was covered in green. I actually stopped there briefly and I crouched down and when I leaned against it I realized it was chain link and that probably wasn't going to be a good place to be. Some of the stuff started coming. I thought briefly about going under the car. But I figured I go under the car, if it doesn't, with my luck the car is not going to be completely crushed or half crushed, then you are stuck under the car.

So at that time I had no choice. I went maybe another 15 feet, 20 feet, and there was a brick wall, which I thought was the side of 1 World Financial Center and I figured since it was a tall building, so I was pretty safe there, which I later found out was only a one story back of the garage. But I basically put myself as flat to the brick wall as I could. There were people around, I don't remember anybody. I don't know. I know Mike said we bumped into each other. I

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didn't remember that actually until we talked. I remember bumping, going like hi, like in a cartoon, where you are trying to go right but you are going left. I don't know where anybody else went.

While I was against the wall, I could hear the stuff coming and I remember looking over my shoulder and I saw the stuff going past me, nothing large. I saw small debris going past me. I remember thinking, what's the chances of something coming straight down the building. That's all I was worried about. So that went on. At that point I figured maybe we will luck out, and then a couple of seconds, I don't know, the stuff seemed to be coming back. It started pinging off the wall. It was like it went that way and then all of a sudden it whipped back. Again, nothing big, I didn't see any big chunks. A lot of dust, a lot of little things. Started pinging back off the wall. At that point I got down on the ground. I went down to maybe my knees, and then the dust came in and then the black came in.

When the black came in I thought, at first I thought that it was smoke coming down there. I saw an orange glow, I don't know where it was, a small orange glow. I believe it was to -- I was disoriented. It

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looked like it was to my left. I'm thinking maybe people; now I'm thinking that jet fuel, the thick black smoke and I'm down on the ground. I got my face, my teeth to the concrete at that point, completely flat, just using what I was taught, you know. Get low. At that point I figured, I kind of thought this was -- my only thought was this is where they're gonna find me on the street corner. I thought I was in -- I it was in a smoke area. I figured like I said it was diesel or jet fuel. It's not going to do any kind of, whatever. It gets inside your lungs just like an oil burner fire.

Anyway, at one point I'm down there and I'm not covering my face. I'm just breathing slowly, I'm pacing my breathing, I'm not panicking, trying to keep everything nice and calm like we are supposed to. I heard some people screaming. Some people like I can't breathe, I can't see, stuff like that. Sporadically, not a lot, very sporadically. Maybe two or three. Somebody, which actually helped me, I don't know who it was, after somebody said I can't breathe, somebody, I don't know which direction it came from, screamed out don't panic or relax, relax. It's not smoke. It's just dust. Just relax.

At that point, that's when I started to

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realize my mouth was filling up with like a sand ball. All of a sudden I realized when whoever said that, now I'm starting to pay attention to my surroundings. I realized there was no heat, you could breathe. Stuff was going in your mouth but it was like a cool air coming in when you breathe it, so I said maybe he was right. You couldn't see, it was gritty.

So at that point I took my jacket and put my jacket around my face. I remember hearing a mask go on, somebody turning on their scott pack. Then I heard the breathing start. I was choking. I was spitting up at that point a little bit. Still not sure what's going on. I remember standing up half way, maybe crouched now, and feeling what I felt, the turnout coat. I remember tapping the guy and asking him if I could -- pal, can I have a hit of that. Whatever. I remember sounding stupid. I said can I have a hit of that and I don't think he heard me.

Anyway, at a certain point while it was still black, previously to that I saw this orange glow before, let me backtrack -- before this guy had said it was dust, I saw an orange glow. I had decided that I think I was going to try to make my way toward the orange glow, figuring again, I've been out of fire ops

for so long, that it was taking in oxygen from the flame. If I get close to the orange glow, I stay low, maybe I will get some oxygen off that, if things were getting bad. That was going through my head prior to realizing what exactly the environment was.

At a point I started moving and I started moving fast. I didn't know where I was, I actually thought I may have been indoors. I took about maybe 3 steps, I was disoriented. At one point it was dead silence and it was pitch black and I thought I was indoors.

So I started to move. I was moving at a good pace, not running, but I think I started a good brisk walk. I banged my knee. It must have been a car. I hit another car. After I hit like two, banging my legs and I hit my shoulder against a car. Something fell on my head. I don't know what the hell it was. It wasn't heavy. I remember thinking it felt like sheetrock and I know it couldn't have been sheetrock. I realized if I start running blindly I'm going to be running into things. So I walked slowly and I saw another glow and when I got up to the glow it was a white SUV. I remember that, because I could see it when I got right up -- you had to get right up on top of it to see it



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was white. He had his headlights on. He must have been in the middle of the street or whatever. I don't know. So I continued going, because I remembered when I parked the water was straight that way. So I thought I was going in the right direction.

Probably a couple of minutes later or very shortly after, I saw the green go to red or red go to green up in the air. As I kept staring at it I could see it was a street light. As I am staring at it, I remember seeing a branch, like branch, looked like it was only about 3 feet over my head. So I figured, I knew I was outdoors. That made me feel better and I just kept going very slowly, eyes squinted, and it started to clear up. As it started to clear up I remember I could see I was on the corner, I guess it was on South End Avenue and Albany. Because the light I think I saw was on South End and Albany right there and then there was a store over here. I made it down South End Avenue. I had no radio. I lost my radio, I had lost my cell phone, which was on my belt. I realized that was gone. My radio was gone. I had no communication.

I wound up going all the way down to the esplanade, I guess. I started to walk by the water,

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that's all I know. Everything was white, everything was dust, there was nobody around. One or two firemen I may have passed. When I got down to the esplanade it was like vacant, and the dust was starting to lift and my eyes are like this, and I got here and I run across a female, she had her shirt up over her head. No under garments. Quite a sight.

But she was going, walking back towards Vesey Street, I don't know where that is, north. She was walking north. So I remember grabbing her and telling her, "You are going the wrong way. Come with me." She was kind of hysterical. She said no no no. She said "How do you know." I said I know because I just came from there. I remember she was grabbing around my shirt and she felt my patch on my windbreaker. She said are you a cop or a fireman. I said I'm from the Fire Department, so she spun around and started walking south and nobody was there.

At that point some young kid, tall kid, with his shirt wrapped around his face, blond hair, I remember he comes popping up and again, going north. I grabbed him and said, "No, let's go this way." At that point we saw a -- I remember seeing a baby carriage from the back. I couldn't see if there was a baby in

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it. I went up to it, spun it around and there was no baby in it. I remember somebody, I don't know who it was, somebody said let's go into one of these buildings over here. He said -- I have no idea where I was at that point. Somebody said the building is open. So whatever it was it was a back door to one of these buildings along the esplanade.

We went up there, we go through there. It was like a triage center with people screaming and panicking. As I walked in I had a windbreaker on. It said Fire Department, Fire Marshal. It was like a magnet. A well dressed older gentleman grabbed me immediately and said, "You are with the Fire Department." I said "Yes." He said, "Well, I'm a doctor, is there anything I can do." I asked him are there any other police officers, firefighters, in this lobby area. He said, "I think EMS, I think you have EMS here. They are in the back." So I went back to EMS. There was a baby there. A small baby, and the lady was going hysterical. The baby looked okay to me. The doctor thought he was okay.

I went into the back room and they were not EMS. They were in uniform, they were park police, I think, if I remember correctly. Park with the green

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uniform. It was a female. She was trying to calm people down. At that point I was having trouble seeing. There was a desk there and a doorman and I remember asking if the phone's working. He said "Yeah," and I said, "I'm gonna use it." He said, "You can't use it." He was a black gentleman. I think I told him we need the phone basically, and I used the phone. I don't know what happened. He moved out of the way and I used the phone and I called headquarters.

I called Chris Temprow. I said Chris, do you know what's going on, I mean I have no phone, I have no radio. Yes, blah blah blah. I said listen, do me a favor. Then I think I said forget about it. I wound up calling Hooper Street, because I know Hooper Street has their radio, they would answer, so I got Hooper Street, and I got, I don't know who I got, I got Murf or somebody. I was looking to move, I'm getting confused. I think at that point I was just trying to get the guys moved back. I don't remember where the first move was going to be. I just wanted everybody that was on West Street to fall back, south. I kept saying go towards Battery Park. I wanted everybody moving towards Battery Park.

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At that point the doctor came over and he said you better wash out your eyes, blah blah blah. I went into the bathroom, somebody gave me some water. I washed my eyes. I was having trouble keeping them open. At that point I looked outside. I hung up. I think I called my house and I called my wife to tell her I was okay. I went back out. I remember the doctor saying, "Where are you going." I said, "I'm going to go back out. I got to find my guys." He said fine. Everything seemed to be okay. It was kind of lifting up. I had given the address, so I gave the phone to the doorman and I said give him the address. Send EMS, or whatever, he was talking to. Then I went back out and I guess I walked back to Albany and up Albany.

As I came across Albany, there was a, I think I ran into Lane, Lechter Lane, yes. There was another Marshal there, I ran into somebody else. I'm getting confused with the second collapse now. Time flies by. I know we definitely had Lechter Lane. There was some sort of bodega or Gristedes or something there. And we went into there, went there to the door. It was locked. I remember knocking on the door and I remember seeing a girl and guy. They weren't going to open the

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door. I took my shield out and knocked my shield against the glass. Open the door. Then she opened up. She didn't know who the hell we were. We went in there and their phone worked. So then I called Chris again and I said we will make this a command post. I have a line going in and out. I believe we took some water. There was other guys that were firemen in there. I can't remember.

Anyway at that point, I believe I asked Lane to stay there. I gave Chris that telephone number. I think I took somebody's radio and I was trying to get people on the radio. I remember getting Jack McCauley and I wanted the guys moving back to Battery Park. We were going towards that way. Somebody said that's like a mile away. You know, back and forth. Now I'm -- I don't think we moved back to Battery Park until the second, it was after the second collapse, right, when we actually got to Battery Park.

At this point I'm a little confused -- where now -- I was there, I think I went back up South End Avenue, okay. That's correct. I'm trying to think. We did move back to Battery Park after the first collapse.

Q. (inaudible)?

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A. Yes, I was back there by the water. The water was right to my back. I remember going back and forth. I had somebody's radio, going back and forth about moving to Battery Park. I think we did. We moved to Battery Park. I think that's when I met you again, right. That was after the first collapse. Okay. Was it after the second collapse?

Okay, that was after the second collapse. Then I got in the truck and drove back. I'm confused now. All I know is we were here. And I may have left Lane. I can't remember who I ran into, okay, whatever. I know I had left Lane on the phone. I spoke to Chris, gave him the address where we were. Okay, now I remember. I was in contact with Jack McCauley and Jimmy Kelty, but he couldn't make it. He kept telling me, he wasn't sure where he was. I think Jack probably wasn't sure where he was and I wasn't exactly sure where my location was at that time. I don't know that area down there. But that was it. We had a lot of radio traffic. Once I got the radio, a lot of radio traffic with Jimmy Kelty, who was supposedly trapped up by 10 and 10. He said he had a bunch of guys with him. Okay. He could not meet. He couldn't get to the West Side Highway. Jack was

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basically telling me it's too far. But I put him in charge. I think he was on up on West Street.

At that point, I don't know how I got, but I remember walking back up the west side. No, no, that was still after the second collapse. No, it wasn't the second collapse. It was on West Street. That's right. On West Street, as I started going to Battery Park, I believe that's when I ran into Chief Nigro. I believe it was Chief Nigro and -- Chief Nigro was by himself. Chief Nigro asked me if I -- I asked Chief Nigro, "Do you know where the command post is, is there a command post?" I said, "I'm thinking about putting my guys back on Battery Park." He asked me if I saw Chief Ganci. I said, "No". I think I asked him again. I said, "You know, I am having the Marshals move back up towards Battery Park. Do you know where our command post is going to be?" I think again he asked me if I had heard or seen from Chief Ganci, if I could find out if anybody.

I think I went over the radio. I got McCauley. I said, Jack, have you seen Chief Ganci. Wherever Jack was. With the guys. He was -- I don't know if anybody was with Jack. Wherever Jack was I can't remember, but I asked Jack because he was the



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only guy that answered me and he didn't see Chief Ganci. I told Chief Nigro no. At that point I believe he started walking back towards the Trade Center.

I think I ran into Andy McCracken, Chief of EMS, and that would have been probably around Rector Street, between Albany and Rector. I don't know what we talked about. He mentioned something to me and I can't remember. At that point I wanted to go back to my car, I figured, to get my -- I told him that I had my car keys, actually my house keys were in my car and it seemed like everything was settled down and everything was that way. I remember I needed my gear. I needed a helmet, I needed my bunker coat. I started walking back down West Street again. There was pretty much nobody there. It was kind of empty. It was weird, with the dust. It was like a ghost town.

I remember getting back to right at the same spot where my car was parked and standing in the middle of Albany Street it was covered with dust. There was a tire in the middle of the street. I ran into Commissioner Gregory, Steve Gregory. Evidently they had sought refuge over here but I'm not sure. I can only remember talking to him. Now this whole trip, I don't know how long it took, 15, 20 minutes, I'm going

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down, going here, stopping there. And coming back, going back. I guess it was about 15, 20 minutes. I remember standing there and reaching for my car keys to open up the car to get my stuff out and then I started talking to Commissioner Gregory. I asked him if he was okay. How you doing? Do you believe it? We were looking up at the thing like it was normal stuff.

I heard that roar again. Sounded like a big jet plane and my back was facing. I was talking to the Commissioner, and I could see the look on his face. I turned around and all I saw was that mushroom coming down. I turned around, I don't know where Commissioner Gregory went. I thought for a second of running across the street because I figured there was something over there, but, because I hadn't been there before, no way, I didn't want to get caught. I just wound up going back, right back to the same spot. Basically, it was like deja vu all over again. Same routine, except I knew what to expect.

Q. Was your car smashed already?

A. My car, the first time the windows blew out. The first time, yes, that's true. When I got back to my car, the passenger's side windows were out. There was a little bit of debris on it, but I remember the

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passenger side front and rear window got, the back window I think was broken. I can't remember when the hood -- the hood, I think that was after the second. Mike might have a picture of that.

I went against the wall, there was a little nook. It was like being by yourself this time. I knew there was nobody around. I went through the whole thing, what's the chance of something coming straight down on you, the whole nine yards, so at least I knew what to expect. After everything blew over and it got dark, I remember there was a fireman. Again, I could hear his mask. He wasn't too far from me. He had a flashlight, he had a light. He was there. I started to move. I moved -- I started to move out a lot faster than I did last time. I didn't wait as long.

Again, I don't know, I didn't feel as much coming out of the sky. The black came in. I remember he was leading the way with a flashlight in his hand. I was holding on to his -- I had asked him for the flashlight. He said, nah, nah, I got it, and I said well, I know the way out of here. I remember telling him, you know, been there, done that. But he held the light and he had his hand on the right wall and he started moving slowly down the block and I had his mask

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and the back of his cylinder. He started going to the right and I knew going to the right was going to go into the building, into the garage. I told him go left. And he said basically, no. I think I just wound up going off to my left in to the middle of the street.

At that point it was still fairly dark, but you could see the street light up the block. As I made it up the block, I wound up - my eyes were bad that time. I couldn't even -- they were hurting, they were hurting, okay. I couldn't find, believe it or not, I couldn't find the Gristedes we went to the first time. I don't know why. I thought it was right there. I thought the store was in like a cove of some sort. Again somewhere back here, I may have been on the wrong corner the first time.

So I went straight back, all the way back to the water again. Made a left, started walking, doing the same thing again. I believe I ran into Mike Kane. Mike Kane is coming this way. He is walking up from Battery Park, direction south, walking north. I am coming this way. I couldn't see him. I said, "Hey Mike, what's up?" He said, "Where's the guys, where you going?" I guess we had some small talk. I said

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hold up a second. I said, "I know there is a store with a phone, I just wanted to find it, but I couldn't. I had to take a break."

So I went to the marina someplace here where the boats are docked. I could have been that far over.

Q. There's only one marina.

A. It's not. There's something over here. There is something over here. You don't have it. It's got to be right around here. I went down these steps on to the marina. I remember seeing two guys taking off on boats. I know boats, I figured there is a hose, there has got to be a hose. I don't know where he has the hose. My eyes were bad. Even Mike said that I couldn't open them up. So I went down there, not a freaking hose. Not -- so I went over to the corner. I just pushed the water out of the way. I remember sticking my head, put my head right into the Hudson River, cleaned my eyes. It felt good. It really did help.

Now when I came back up, I think -- I don't know if I lost another radio, or Mike had a radio or we used the same radio. Again at that point I think that's when I started asking everybody to go to Battery Park. Not towards Battery Park. I said I wanted the

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command post, I want all the Marshals to Battery Park. Again I remember getting Jack McCauley, I remember the guys at Hooper Street answering me, and asking them to relay it. I wanted the command post back at Battery Park. I think it was Jack, who said it's a mile to Battery Park. I don't remember who said it, but I want everybody at Battery Park. Jimmy Kelty, we found that he could not make it to Battery Park. I had Mike with me.

Somehow we wound up coming up one of these side streets. I got Mike into the -- we wound up in this space I was in before, this little supermarket. Okay. I don't think Lane was there, and I was a little upset. As it turned out, that's why I left him in charge there, so we could have an open line with a radio, for the radio and the phones. If I needed, I could call up Lane and he could call on the phone. But evidently, nobody knew where he was and evidently it turned out that he -- somebody got hurt. He wound up helping somebody so he wasn't there. Lechter was gone with the radio and there was no Fire Marshal present. So it was me, myself and Mike. We took over the phones again. We did the phone things. I don't know what else we did.

R. McCahey

I think -- I can't remember if there was another Marshal or two that showed up in there. What I think was I asked the guy for two box cameras that were hanging up there. I took two box cameras off the thing. I gave the guy my name, I said thanks. I remember last time, what had happened in '93 was we had one of the first initial photographs. Timmy Marr got a lot of photographs that nobody had, the press didn't have. Today everybody has cameras, so it didn't help, but I took both box cameras and then we went back out.

I started walking towards Battery Park. Took a weird route there. I can't remember. I was with Mike so Mike may remember better. I think we hit the back roads. Then we ran into another dead end and we had to go down again. But Mike said he knew because that's the way he came. We made it eventually, we made it back -- we made it to Battery Park. Okay. I may be missing things here because I should have wrote this down in the beginning because between both of these and being in the same place both times I'm getting confused, but I think I'm pretty much right on that.

We made it back to Battery Park, and I remember the first guy I saw, I remember seeing Mike, you sitting there with a bunch of guys sitting there.

R. McCAHEY

I remember Mike looking like a war zone. Guys were covered, disheveled, beat up, you name it. But I saw a lot of guys there, so I was kind of happy. I didn't know if my message -- who was getting it through there as far as moving back to Battery Park. If Hooper Street was working. I don't know if Jack did it all by himself. I remember reaching out to Bobby. I might have even gotten Bobby once or twice. All I remember Jack, we had a lot of dialogue on the radio. He seemed to be the only guy who was getting back to me. So somebody had it.

I remember walking up there and seeing who we had, if everybody was okay. The usual. I grabbed the supervisor, I guess it was Jack. I remember Bobby there and Jimmy Devery. John Grogan was there. So I asked is everybody here, everybody okay. Looked like everything was okay.

At that point I turn around and I see Dr. Kelly and Dr. Prezant were coming up the street and I remember the first thing - I said hello to Dr. Kelly. She was right by me. I remember she just went and asked everybody is everybody okay. She went there talking to the guys. At that point Jack McCauley came over to me and he said something to the effect that



R. McCahey

Chief, we are missing a couple of guys. Who are we missing. I did a roll call. We are missing Ronnie Bucca. I said, "Who is the supervisor? " He said Jimmy Devery. I said send Jimmy over. Jimmy came over, I said, "Jimmy, where's Ronnie?" He says, "I think he was in the building. I'm not sure." I probably got a little upset with him. You know, what do you mean you're not sure? He's either in the building or out of the building. He said, "I think he's in the building." I think I might have asked, "What was he doing in the building?"

At that point I don't know what I did, I just walked back over there to Jack McCauley and Jack goes calm down, I said okay. And then it dawned on me and I had Jimmy come over and I asked who is his partner and I think he said Andy Difusco. I said, "Where is Andy Difusco? " He said, "I don't know." Now I'm thinking we are missing two guys. I think we -- I think Jack somebody. I may have had someone go on the radio, ask around, are they here, are they there, are they there.

At that point we had the mobile command post parked there, the big trailer. I remember walking into the trailer and only seeing Chief Nigro sitting in there. Wondering where everybody was. At that point

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we had gotten in touch. I think -- I think I started asking Louie again, because I had a radio. I remember Louis, Chief Garcia, was over on the other side. He was asking if I could come over to his command post at Manhattan Community College. That's where his new command post was. You know the Fire Department command post.

So to make a long story short, I grabbed the crime scene unit, Mickey Shadwicke. I spent probably the next 20 hours with Mickey. That truck was great for getting through the streets with the lights. So I got in there and had Mickey wheel me over to the Manhattan College, Community College command post, where I hooked up with Garcia.

It was at that time that Garcia told me that Chief Ganci was dead. I believe Chief Feehan was dead. Father Judge, I was in total amazement -- at that time, even with all that I forgot that people were in harm's way.

From there the Chief wanted to know where the Marshals were. I said I had the Marshals at the command post in Battery Park. I think while we were there, I believe Jack McCauley moved in farther into the park, because there was still dust and debris.

R. McCAHEY

Chief Garcia wanted to go to the command post, so we walked back.

At that point I had the camera, they were taking pictures. It was a scene of devastation, just walking back, cars were turned over.

Q. You had said to me you were north of the south bridge?

A. Yes, for the first time, yes. After we left the Manhattan Community College, we just walked back and we got to the north bridge there. We couldn't get by there. We just walked and walked and then when we left, when we got to here, I took him back down to where the store was. I called the Marshals. I had somebody else in there. I know we just all walked together. We all walked together back to Battery Park.

Nobody was there. We started walking. Jack said keep walking. We have to move farther. You guys were like by the restaurant. There seemed to be more guys, a couple more guys than the first time.

Basically we took stock of what we had to do. We told everybody we were moving up to the Manhattan Community College. I don't remember much. My eyes were killing me so bad Louie did all the talking. I think I just kept dumping water bottles on

R. McCahey

my eyes.

Q. (inaudible)?

A. At that point after Louie gave me the directions, we jumped back into the crime scene unit. I believe it was myself, Garcia, and maybe, I don't know, maybe Bobby, maybe not. I can't remember. We went back to Manhattan Community College, where we pretty much set up our command post the remainder of the night.

During the course of the night they walked in early on in the evening, they walked in with this guy that was wearing fire fighting gear. Somebody had seen him at the pile. They brought him in. We had him in another room there, Intelligence was notified, I believe it was Inspector Arnett showed up from Intelligence and we turned him over to them. I believe it was at that time I had my first contact with Andy Difusco, who showed up, looked like Lil' Abner. Basically just a T-shirt, pair of ripped pants, I don't even think he had shoes on. I didn't know that he was -- I didn't know how much he was involved in this collapse. I didn't put two and two together, why he had no clothes on. I never realized till later on.

He was basically talkative, he was active,

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doing his job. We had a lot of Marshals starting to show up. I had all the supervisors in there. I started delegating different jobs, you know. I gave -- I broke up the Marshals regardless of who their squad was. I assigned to get some coverage going. I assigned -- somebody marked to be supervisor, so we had some control. I believe for the most part that's what we were doing right at that point.

We had some contact going in. Guys were coming back and forth. I don't know -- not much more for us to do. At one point later on I then took a break, again going back to my original why I went back to the second collapse. I needed to get my gear. At that point, it seems like it's probably going towards the afternoon, 3:00. The recovery effort was on, I grabbed Mickey Shadwicke, I said, "Mickey, I want you to take a walk with me."

First we were going to drive, we couldn't get the truck down. I needed to get in my car. All my gear was in the truck, my duffle bag, my bag, my briefcase, my keys, so Mickey and I walked all the way back to Albany, the back route to Albany and at that point I noticed there was a pole, a six-foot long pole through the back window and then right through the

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front. It looked like a curtain rod. It was round. All the windows were blown out, the hood was semi-dented. My trunk was up. No, my trunk was closed. I opened up the trunk. It was covered with ash, with white powder, I couldn't figure out how it got in there.

Later on Mike had showed me a picture that he took after the second collapse of the trunk of my car. My trunk was open. Somehow it popped open and somebody must have closed it. That's what it was. I couldn't figure out how I had so much stuff inside it. I loaded up all my stuff, my 400 pounds of bunker gear and me and Mickey trucked it all the way back and threw it into the back of the crime scene unit.

Q. Were you parked near any companies, any fire companies?

A. I remember parking, I remember that when I pulled up. When I made the left on Albany, there was nobody else on the street. Right behind me pulled up a black Crown Vic '93 behind me, because I know what it is. Three guys got out. They looked like police types. That car -- I'm trying to remember -- that car was gone. The car was gone when I went back with Mickey. I remember saying I don't know if it was

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totalled. My car was gone by the second day. We went back the second day, because I remember, I was actually going to try to move it down the block, because I remember I said I will get in, stay hunched over and I can get this started. I walked with the key and when I got there the car was gone.

The only car left on the block was a blue Crown Vic, which turned out to be down the block, which turned out to be Dr. Kelly's car. That was down the block. Well, that's it. If you have specific questions, go ahead.

Q. Prior to losing your radio, do you remember hearing any transmissions?

A. Nothing. All I remember is the verbal part, the collapsing, and then like most guys said, the dead silence. Again, not panic. Like maybe two or three people, saying I can't see, I can't breathe. I can't see. That was it. Like one or two, and whoever the guy was, I don't know. Something tells me it was a Marshal. The guy that said that it's not smoke, relax, it's not smoke, it's just dust. That actually got me thinking.

Q. It wasn't Bobby Burns by any chance?

A. No, it wasn't Bobby. Brian Grogan said it

R. McCAHEY

was one of his guys. I think he said that. I'm not sure if he had a name. I don't know where Bob was. You were even close. I didn't even know you were that close.

Q. Right after I bumped into you. Chief Barbara, you said you saw him when you reached the scene?

A. Chief Barbara, he was talking.

Q. Was he parked?

A. There was a car parked there. Now there was a trunk open. That would have been Albany before I went under the underpass, so right from Albany, what, he was parked on West, maybe they were on West. I don't know whose car it was. Somebody's trunk was up. They were on -- it was Albany. It was on West Street between Albany and Liberty. It was probably in front of the World Financial Center where we had the command post. That was when I first got there.

Q. They were walking?

A. No, they were talking. I believe it was him. Harry Meyers. Steve Gregory and maybe Sal Cassano. I'm not sure. That day I remember saying I'm getting confused. People were telling me they were over here, over there. Again it was well before the



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first collapse. It was almost like they were just getting their stuff together. They were at somebody's car getting their stuff. I remember thinking maybe that was the command post and asking them if it was the command post.

No, I remember to myself because I thought it was unusual that both Barbara and Harry were there, do you know what I'm saying, because (inaudible). That's it. No, that was the last place I probably saw him, when I was walking up West Street.

Q. Anything else?

FIRE MARSHAL CAMPBELL: Time is now 12:01.

Thank you very much, Chief.